

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9833

INFO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

DIRNSA IMMEDIATE

USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

CINCPACAF HICKAM AFB HI

CINCSAC OFFUTT AFB NE

CINCPACFLT MAKALAPA HI

13 AF/CC CLARK AS PI

13AF/CV UTAPAO

AMCONSUL CHIAN G MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

COMUSMACTHAI BANGKOK TH

S E C R E T BANGKOK 5377

USIA PASS IEA

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MPOL, MASS, MILI, TH

SUBJ: RTC ANNOUNCEMENT ON WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL

REF: A) BANGKOK 5363 DTG 091055Z MAR 76 B) STATE 056692 (DTG
090046Z MAR 76)

1. FOLLOWING ARE EMBASSY COMMENTS ON RTG ANNOUNCEMENT ON
WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL FROM THAILAND (REF A).

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2. THE ANNOUNCEMENT IS A CAREFULLY DRAFTED, CONSCIOUSLY

REASONABLE STATEMENT EMPHASIZING THAI DESIRE FOR FRIENDLY FUTURE RELATIONS WITH U.S. AND AT THE SAME TIME CLEARLY SETTING FORTH THE RTG'S DETERMINATION THAT ANY RESIDUAL U.S. PRESENCE MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH THAI SOVEREIGNTY AND SERVE THAI INTERESTS.

3. THE ANNOUNCEMENT SEEMS TO IMPLY A FAIRLY LOW LIMIT ON THE U.S. RESIDUAL PRESENCE. IT CONTEMPLATES A "MAAG AT PRESENT NUMBERING 270 PERSONS" AND MAKES CLEAR THAT THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT OF 1950 APPLIES TO THEM ALONE FOR STATUS OF FORCES PURPOSES. IN ADDITION TO THE MAAG, IT OPENS THE POSSIBILITY OF "A NUMBER OF AMERICAN TECHNICIANS" REMAINING AFTER MARCH 20 IN CONNECTION WITH "CERTAIN PROJECTS OF COOPERATION."

4. THE PRESENCE OF THESE ADDITIONAL TECHNICIANS, PRESUMABLY STRICTLY LIMITED IN NUMBERS, IS BASED ON "A SET OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES" WHICH THE THAI GOVERNMENT HAS SUGGESTED. FAILURE TO REACH AGREEMENT ON THESE PRINCIPLES BY MARCH 20 WOULD RESULT IN TERMINATION OF FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE RESIDUAL U.S. ACTIVITIES ("PROJECTS OF COOPERATION") IN QUESTION AND THE "TECHNICIANS" WOULD HAVE TO BE WITHDRAWN WITHIN A REASONABLE (BUT UNSPECIFIED) PERIOD OF TIME.

5. THE SUBSTANTIVE PORTION OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT CONCLUDES BY SAYING THAT IF AGREEMENT ON THE PRINCIPLES IS REACHED BEFORE MARCH 20, THEN DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS GOVERNING THE "TECHNICIANS" PORTION OF THE RESIDUAL PRESENCE COULD BE WORKED OUT THEREAFTER.

6. IN ESSENCE, THE ANNOUNCEMENT, WHILE SEEMING TO RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A RESIDUAL PRESENCE OF THE SIZE AND COMPOSITION PROPOSED BY THE U.S. AND ALSO EXCLUDING THE 1950 AGREEMENT AS THE BASIS FOR THE NON-JUSMAG COMPONENT OF THAT PRESENCE, LEAVES SOME OPTIONS OPEN AND APPEARS TO EASE THE MARCH 20 DEADLINE IN SOME RESPECTS.

7. THE ANNOUNCEMENT DOES NOT SPELL OUT THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES, AND THUS MIGHT LEAVE ROOM FOR NEGOTIATION OF THE LANGUAGE OF ALL OF THEM, INCLUDING PRINCIPLE 1. IT DOES NOT CALL FOR THE IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE OF ALL NON-JUSMAG PERSONNEL IN THE EVENT
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OF NON-AGREEMENT ON THE PRINCIPLES, AND THEREFORE ADMITS THE POSSIBILITY THAT NEGOTIATION ON THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES COULD CONTINUE AFTER MARCH 20. IT ALSO PROVIDES THE BASIS, IF IT COMES TO THAT, FOR A WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT RANCOR OR ACRIMONY.

8. IT IS VAGUE ON THE ARRANGMENTS UNDER WHICH U.S. FORCES MIGHT BE TEMPORARILY PRESENT AFTER MARCH 20 IF AGREEMENT IS NOT REACHED ON THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES BY THEN, AND IT ALSO

DOES NOT SPECIFY WHAT KIND OF STATUS THEY MIGHT BE ACCORDED
IF AGREEMENT IS REACHED.

9. LASTLY, BY ITS EMPHASIS ON "TECHNICIANS" AND "PROJECTS
OFF COOPERATION," AND ITS REJECTION OF ACTIVITIES THAT FIGURED
DIRECTLY IN THE WARS IN INDOCHINA, IT IS PROBABLY INTENDED TO
MAKE CLEAR THAT THE STRUCTURE WE HAVE CONTEMPLATED AT UTAPAO
IS COMPLETELY OUT OF THE QUESTION.

10. A KEY POINT IS THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT CONTINUES TO CONDITION
FURTHER DIALOGUE CONCERNING THE U.S. RESIDUAL PRESENCE ON AGREE-
MENT ON THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES. A U.S. RESPONSE IS THEREFORE
ALL THE MORE URGENT, AND WE HOPE THAT THE INSTRUCTIONS ENABLING
US TO IMPLEMENT THE VERY IMAGINATIVELY AND ABLY DRAFTED U.S.
COUNTERPROPOSALS (REF B) WILL REACH US SOONEST. WE CONSIDER
THAT THE TACTICS RECOMMENDED BY US REMAIN VALID, AND URGE
THAT THE DEPARTMENT SEND US THE AWAITED INSTRUCTIONS IMMEDIATELY
SO THAT THE AMBASSADOR CAN GIVE OUR FORMAL RESPONSE TO THE
SEVEN PRINCIPLES TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 10, BANGKOK TIME. WE BELIEVE THIS IS ESSENTIAL TO AVOID
FURTHER INCREASE IN THE GROWING IMPRESSION OF CONFRONTATION
BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, AND TO AVOID FEEDING THE WIDELY
HELD THAI BELIEF THAT WE ARE DRAGGING OUR FEET.
WHITEHOUSE

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